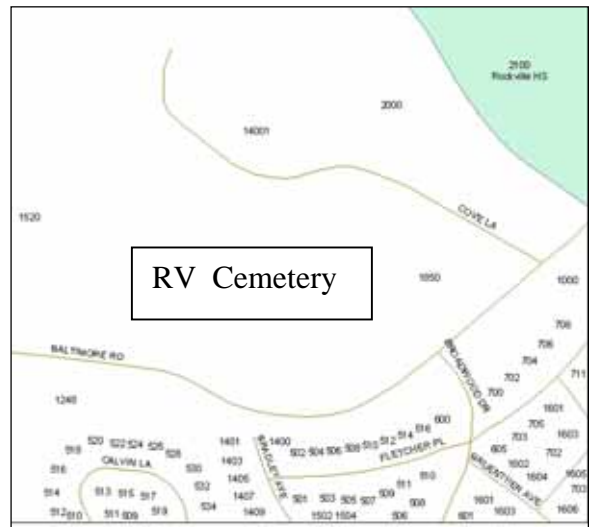


CITY OF ROCKVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT
for
May 19, 2005
MEETING NO. 05-05

APPLICATION:	HDC2005-00331
ADDRESS:	1350 Baltimore Road
ACCEPTED:	April 18, 2005
45 DAY LIMIT:	June 2, 2005
OWNER:	Rockville Cemetery Association
REQUEST:	Install free-standing sign
STAFF:	Cindy Kebba



STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval to install a free-standing 4'x4' wood sign, with wording and design as submitted with the application, at the entrance to Rockville Cemetery on Baltimore Road at Avery Road.

BACKGROUND:

Previous Requests:

HDC2003-00237	Mature tree removal
HDC2003-00261	Removal of large silver maple damaged limb
HDC2003-00264	Removal of two mature white oaks
HDC2004-00319	Removal of 4 mature trees
MAP2001-00072	Map Amendment for Historic District Overlay Zone

Property Area: 7.7 acres (older, west section, accessed from Avery Road)
16.87 acres (newer section, adjacent to circular private road, accessed from Baltimore Road at east and west ends)

Zone: R-90-HD

The R-90 zone is single-family detached residential. The Rockville Cemetery is a grandfathered non-conforming use within the R-90 zone.

City of Rockville Permits Required:

1. HDC Certificate of Approval
2. Sign permit (the proposed 16 square feet meets the sign ordinance requirement for maximum size in the R-90 zone.)

BACKGROUND

Historic, archeological, or architectural value and significance of the site or structure and its relationship to the historic, archeological, or architectural significance of the surrounding area.

✓ **Contributing**
Non-Contributing

Significance: The history of Rockville Cemetery links the settlement period of this area to the present. Records document almost 270 years of continuous use of this site. Initiated as a Colonial burying ground associated with a Chapel of Ease established by Prince George Parish (Anglican Church) in 1738, the property has been owned by the Rockville Cemetery Association (RCA) since 1880. It is significant as the community's oldest burying ground. It is also significant as an excellent example of the rural cemetery movement and for the many individuals who were prominent in Rockville and in Montgomery County who are buried there. Although it has been enlarged and modernized over time, the original 2-acre site and some of the earliest gravestones are extant.

Background History: Rockville Cemetery is located next to the Rockville Civic Center to the north and Baltimore Road to the south and is bisected by a City-owned 1.8209-acres strip of land that follows Little Falls Branch from Baltimore Road to the Civic Center. It is bounded by Avery Road to the west and an apartment complex to the east. The cemetery was established c.1740, as will be noted on the proposed sign. The older section is to the west, and the newer section (purchased in 1933 by the RCA) is to the east of the City-owned property. The site includes a caretaker's house (which was built c. 1889 by the RCA) and two frame garden/utility sheds.

DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT:

The relationship of the exterior architectural features of the structure to the remainder of the entire structure and to the surrounding area.

The proposed free-standing wood sign is intended to identify the cemetery to east- and west-bound travelers along Baltimore Road at its intersection with Avery Road. The wording will be limited. It will identify the site as a historic cemetery, the date it was established, and the telephone number to call for information. The sign will not have any negative effect on the cemetery and it will be located outside the cemetery gates. Its size, material, and design are appropriate. There will not be any lighting to illuminate the sign.

The existing cemetery signs were installed in 1998. According to the *Rockville Cemetery Historic District Design Guidelines*, approved in 2004, page 39, "Installed in 1998, the current entrance signs do not contribute to the overall historic significance of the cemetery. Although they were sensitively designed, their removal would not affect the cemetery's integrity. Should

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replacement signs be desired, the design should be sensitive to the historic nature of the cemetery and will require a Certificate of Approval. The new signs must conform to the City's sign ordinance and to Technical Guide No. 9: Signs." The proposed sign would not replace the existing signs, but it is felt that those signs are not sufficient in terms of identifying the cemetery or providing basic information.

The proposed sign size and location meet the City's sign ordinance requirements. Technical Guide No. 9: Signs, states the HDC policy with regard to signs in the historic districts. This sign is not within the cemetery itself, but is upon adjacent RCA land that is designated and within the area of review. It, therefore, does not adversely impact the historic character of the cemetery itself. In general, signs should be simple in design with limited words. It appears that some removal of brush may be necessary to maximize visibility of the sign at the proposed location.



Rockville Cemetery
entrance from
Baltimore and Avery
Roads

Proposed location of sign

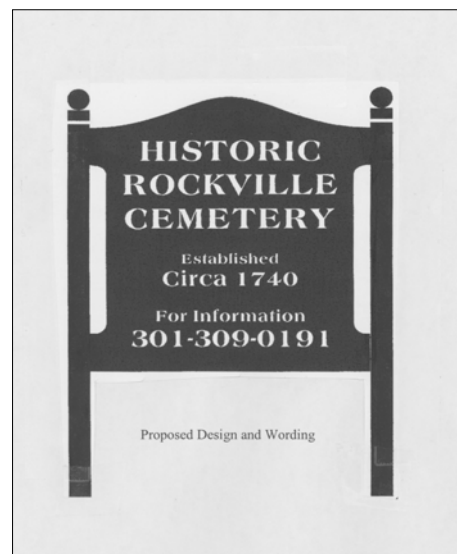
Baltimore Road

St. Mary's Church
secondary cemetery

MATERIALS:

The general compatibility of exterior design, scale, proportion, arrangement, texture, and materials proposed to be used.

The 4-foot by 4-foot sign will be wood, painted brown with white lettering, and as shown to the right.



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

To any other factors, including aesthetic factors, which the Commission deems to be pertinent, including items such as cost, tax credits, options, and alternative plans.

Tax credits do not apply.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval to install a free-standing 4' x4' wood sign, with wording and design as submitted with the application, at the entrance to Rockville Cemetery on Baltimore Road at Avery Road.

COMPLIANCE WITH GUIDELINES:

Staff finds that the proposed alterations meet the Secretary of Interior Standards and City of Rockville Technical Guide for Exterior Alteration # 9 for signs.

DRAFT MOTION OF APPROVAL :

Finding HDC2005-00331 for installation of a free-standing wood sign at the entrance to the Rockville Cemetery property at 1350 Baltimore Road in compliance with the Secretary of Interior Standards #10, "New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired," and in compliance with City of Rockville Guideline # 9, I move approval of the application with the following conditions:

- 1.
- 2.

Attachments: Certificate of Approval application